DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 464 068 SP 040 670

AUTHOR Reif, Margaret T.; Warring, Douglas F.

TITLE Why Teach: A Comparative Analysis of Responses from Prospective Teachers Enrolled in Professional Education Programs in 1991-92 with Those in 2000-01.

PUB DATE 2002-00-00
NOTE 30p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative (142) -- Tests/Questionnaires (160)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Preservice Teacher Education; Public Schools; *Student Teacher Attitudes; Student Teachers; *Teacher Shortage
IDENTIFIERS University of Saint Thomas MN

ABSTRACT

This study compared responses from prospective teachers in the academic years, 1991-92 and 2000-01 regarding their reasons for entering teaching and thier beliefs about their prospects. Student teachers in traditional and nontraditional programs were compared. Students in a teacher preparation program that offers a B.A. for undergraduates and a license leading to an M.A. for graduate students completed the latter survey. This information was compared to similar data collected 10 years previously. Data included demographics, grade point average, licensure-interest area, desired place of employment, parental educational levels and occupations, and main reasons for wanting to teach. In the 10 years between surveys, a better balance between elementary and secondary teacher education majors developed. The undergraduate program continued to be predominantly traditional age students, while the graduate program generally enrolled nontraditional age students. The racial makeup continued to be predominantly white. Grade point averages increased. Undergraduates continued to choose suburban settings for teaching. Graduate students showed decreased interest in urban settings. The 2000-01 study showed a lower percentage of students who chose teaching because of their love for children compared to responses given 10 years ago. Fewer students reported wanting to teach because it was a challenging, rewarding profession. The questionnaire and resulting data are appended. (Contains 23 references.) (SM)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

Running Head: Why Teach?

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Margaret Reif

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 464 068

Why Teach:

A comparative analysis of responses from prospective teachers enrolled in professional education programs in 1991-92 with those in 2000-01.

Margaret T. Reif and Douglas F. Warring

University of St. Thomas

1000 LaSalle Avenue

Minneapolis, MN 55403-2009

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SP040670

Why Teach: A comparative analysis of responses from prospective teachers enrolled in professional education programs in 1991-92 with those in 2000-01

Abstract

As we face continuing shortages of teachers in some parts of the country why do some students want to become teachers while others do not? Research suggests salaries as a main issue; is it really? A comparative analysis of responses from prospective teachers enrolled in professional education programs in 1991-92 and 2000-2001 was conducted. In addition to evaluating students in traditional and non-traditional programs, attitudes and values of prospective teachers were evaluated. Since the process of value shaping is an interactive one that needs to be more fully explored, the results are very important to teacher educators.

Introduction

Is there a teacher shortage? What do prospective teachers think about their prospects? Why do people want to enter the teaching profession? These are some of the questions to consider when analyzing responses from prospective teachers. Recruiting New Teachers (2001) Teaching Field Facts indicates that at a time when educational quality is a priority on the public's list of electoral concerns, urban classrooms across the U.S. continue to suffer in many ways, one of which is a continuing serious teacher shortages. As the population in the United States continues to become more urban, the enrollment in the urban schools also increases. Given the overall population increases there is a commensurate growth in public school enrollment. With this increase, the problem of too few teachers is likely to become worse before any noticeable improvement occurs.

There are shortages in selected regions of the United States. In the next ten years, according to RNT (2001), American schools will need to hire two million teachers to meet rising enrollment demand and replace an aging teaching force. Half of our nation's teachers will retire during this time period. According to the U.S. Department of Education, by 2006, America will educate almost three million more children than today--more than 54 million youngsters.

The Urban Teacher Challenge report, released by Recruiting New Teachers (RNT) in January 2000, examined the nation's major urban school districts and found that almost 100% have an urgent need for teachers in at least one high need subject area, such as special education (97.5%), science (97.5%), and math (95%). An acute shortage also exists for bilingual and ESL teachers and educational technology specialists. More than half of the districts responding to the survey (52.5%) report a need for more elementary teachers and a high need (82.5%) for male teachers. (RNT 2001)

Allowing non-licensed personnel to work in schools is a serious problem that has resulted from a teacher shortage in locations and/or by academic areas of preparation. According to Ingersol (2001) about two-thirds (60%) of these urban districts allow non-certified teachers to teach under an emergency license and the same percentage (60%) allow for hiring of long-term substitutes. In all, 82.5% of districts allow non-credentialed teachers in the classroom.

Teacher Profile

The National Education Association (NEA) has conducted surveys on the status of the American public school teacher every five years since 1960 to meet the continuing need for comprehensive information on public school teachers. A nationally representative sample of 1,325 public school teachers responded to a questionnaire mailed in March 1996. Results based on the entire sample have a margin of error of plus or minus 2.3 percentage points at a 90 percent confidence level.

The results of the survey provide a comprehensive picture of the characteristics of American public school teachers, and how they have changed since 1960. According to the NEA (1997) almost three-quarters (74.4%) are female. Some 90.7 percent are White; 7.3 percent are Black; 1.0 percent are Asian/Pacific Islander; and 1.0 percent are American Indian/Alaska

Native. In terms of origin, 4 percent of all teachers are Hispanic. The typical teacher is 43 years old (66.9% are 40 years of age or older; 10.7% are below 30).

Teachers are highly educated as more than half (54.5%) have a master's degree or a 6-year diploma and an additional 1.7 percent have doctoral degrees. Most teachers are married (75.9%), and 92 percent of their spouses are employed either full- or part-time. Nearly half have children (43.8%); 19 percent have one child, and 18.8 percent have two children. Teachers have an average of 16 years of full-time experience, making the current teaching force the most experienced of all survey years. Some 46.1 percent entered teaching more than 20 years ago, compared with 16.8 percent who entered within the last five years. Teachers earned an average annual salary of $35,549 in the 1995-96 school year. More than half (58.6%) earned additional income, which averaged $3,636 (NEA, 1997).

Changes in demographics have occurred recently with 73 percent of public school teachers being women, 33 percent under 40, and 47 percent had a master's degree or above in 1993-94. By comparison, about 75 percent of the 378,000 full-time and part-time private school teachers were women. About 42 percent of the private school teachers were under age 40, and 34 percent had a master's or higher degree (NEA, 1997).

Teacher Education

Many policy-makers and educational critics believe that teacher education is ineffective. Educational research, however, refutes that belief. Research by Ashton & Crocker (1986) and by Darling-Hammond & Sclan, (1996) found that teachers who earn more credit hours in professional education obtain higher ratings from supervisors and have higher student test scores than teachers with fewer credits in professional education. Supervisors rate the effectiveness of graduates of colleges of education more highly than graduates from liberal arts or other non-

education majors, and teachers with regular state certification receive higher supervisor ratings and have higher student achievement than teachers who do not meet certification standards (Ashton & Crocker, 1986; Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996).

Other researchers such as Grossman (1990) found that the teachers in her study without teacher preparation experienced problems in anticipating student difficulties in learning the subject and in transforming the subject matter content to make it accessible to their students. Furthermore, teachers who lack formal teacher preparation are likely to hold low expectations for low-income children and children of color and to harbor misconceptions about the nature of learning and effective teaching (Grossman, 1990; Murray, 1996).

Research shows that teacher education provides teachers with knowledge, skills, and dispositions that enable them to be more effective in the classroom than their counterparts who lack such preparation. Improvements in teacher education are still needed (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996; Grossman, 1990; Murray, 1996).

Several conditions have converged to make this an interesting and challenging time for research that informs change in teacher education (Ashton, 1996). Teacher educators will have a unique opportunity to influence the development of a new generation of teachers. Virtually the entire teaching force will retire within about 15 years. Projections suggest schools in the United States will need 200,500 teachers annually to replace the teachers who retire (Darling-Hammond & Sclan, 1996). Since we have many teachers that leave teaching after a year or two turnover is also a significant issue. According to Ingersol (2001) teacher turnover is a significant phenomenon that must be dealt with as it increases the need for new teachers.

Over 1,100 institutions prepare preservice teachers, and in recent years legislative mandates and teacher education consortia have stimulated changes in teacher education. As a

result programs have become more diverse in structure and content than perhaps ever before. Undoubtedly, programs differ in quality and outcomes, yet little research has been conducted to analyze the impact of these differences on teachers' thinking and practices. Significant funding is needed to take advantage of this unique opportunity to study these naturally occurring experiments in teacher preparation

There are many significant problems that must be addressed, including some that are not as yet even anticipated. Lanier and Little (1986) identified chronic problems that have limited the effectiveness of teacher education: the under-representation of academically talented persons in teaching and teacher education, the lack of intellectual challenge in the teacher education curriculum, and disgraceful conditions in schools. To succeed in improving teacher education, we must overcome these problems. As these are being addressed in some programs other societal issues need to be addressed.

To cope with the conditions in schools, prospective teachers need to develop an understanding of the cultures of schools and the conditions that will make their work difficult. Further, they need knowledge and skills that enable them to work collaboratively to improve the conditions that diminish their effectiveness. Many complex issues continually arise in society consisting of other issues such as cultural changes and the knowledge explosion. As Sarason (1993) has previously noted, without this knowledge and skill, efforts to reform teacher education and the schools will fail.

Research Overview

As we face continuing shortages of teachers in some parts of the country why do some students want to become teachers while others do not? Research suggests salaries as a main issue; is it really? In addition to evaluating students in traditional and non-traditional programs,

attitudes and values of prospective teachers were evaluated. Since the process of value shaping is an interactive one that needs to be more fully explored, the results are very important to teacher educators.

The instrument used to collect the data (see Appendix 1) was a survey of students enrolled in Block One of a teacher preparation program that offers a BA for undergraduates and license leading to an MA for graduate students. Block One is often used as a testing ground for students who are unsure of their career choice; this is especially so in the undergraduate program.

The survey was given to all students enrolled in Block One. They were informed that filling it out was voluntary and had no impact on their grade. The data was collected and analyzed comparing it to similar data collected ten years ago. Demographic data was collected along with high school attended, college attended (for graduate students), home of origin, grade point average, licensure-interest area, desired place of employment, and the education levels and occupations of parents/guardians. The respondents were then asked to list their top three reasons for wanting to teach.

An analysis was conducted and the specific results will be shared comparing and contrasting the results of a similar survey conducted in 1991. Interesting data includes undergraduates' and graduates' reasons cited for wanting to teach.

This article will introduce the setting and programs of the students in this survey, share the results and analysis of both the 1991 and 2001 surveys, compare and contrast those results, and analyze portions in light of a national survey.

University of St. Thomas

The University of St. Thomas (UST) is located in St. Paul-Minneapolis, Minnesota. St. Thomas is a comprehensive, co-educational, Catholic, diocesan, university. It was founded in

1885 with 62 students and a faculty of five and now enrolls over 10,000 students with over 350 full-time faculty on four campuses, making it the largest independent college or university in Minnesota.

Undergraduate Elementary

For students interested in becoming elementary school teachers, St. Thomas offers the opportunity to earn a degree with a major in elementary education and a co-major in a special field of interest within the arts and sciences. This major ranks 4th in requested majors with undergraduate students and is the second most requested major for students transferring to the University of St. Thomas.

All students observe and participate in three field experiences in varied school settings for over 150 hours prior to their student teaching semester. Students are also required to complete an experience in a cultural setting different from their own. These unique, off-site opportunities provide experiential learning invaluable for prospective teachers. At the end of the program, students earn a double major as well as a K-6 Minnesota licensure with a 5-8 specialty in communication arts and literature, mathematics, science, social studies, or world languages and cultures.

Block I		
EDUC 210	Education's Place in Society (+ field experience)	(4 cr.)
EDUC 212	Human Relations and Multicultural Education	(4 cr.)
BLOCK II		
EDUC 330	Psychology for Teaching and Learning (+ field experience)	(4 cr.)
EDUC 350	Language Development, Literacy, and Literature I	(4 cr.)
BLOCK III		
EDUC 370	Language Development, Literacy, and Literature II	(4 cr.)
EDUC 371	Teaching Mathematics and Technology	(4 cr.)
EDUC 372	Teaching Science and Healthy Active Living	(4 cr.)
EDUC 373	Teaching Social Studies and Fine Arts	(4 cr.)

EDUC 374	Seminar in Middle Level Specialty Area (+ field experience)	(0 cr.)
BLOCK IV		
EDUC 456	Introduction to Exceptionality	(2 cr.)
EDUC 460	Student Teaching	(6 cr.)
EDUC 461	The Teacher as Educational Advocate	(4 cr.)

Undergraduate Secondary

Students interested in teaching in grades 5-12 choose among 14 licensure areas and complete an education major as well as a co-major from arts and sciences. Students complete three field experiences for over 75 hours before their full-time, full-day, student teaching semester.

Students are also required to complete an experience in a cultural setting different from their own. These unique, off-site opportunities provide experiential learning invaluable for prospective teachers.

Secondary Course Requirements

BLOCK I		
EDUC 210	Education's Place in Society (+ field experience)	(4 cr.)
EDUC 212	Human Relations and Multicultural Education	(4 cr.)
BLOCK II		
EDUC 330	Psychology for Teaching and Learning (+ field experience)	(4 cr.)
BLOCK III		
EDUC 380	Curriculum and Methods for Specific Discipline K-12 (+ field experience) OR	(4 cr.)
EDUC 381	Curriculum and Methods for Specific Discipline 5-8 (+ field experience)	(2 cr.)
EDUC 382	Curriculum and Methods for Specific Discipline 9-12	(2 cr.)
BLOCK IV		
EDUC 456	Introduction to Exceptionality	(2 cr.)
EDUC 460	Student Teaching	(6 cr.)
EDUC 461	The Teacher as Educational Advocate	(4 cr.)

(University of St. Thomas, 2001, pp. 49-51)

Graduate Elementary & Secondary

This program is designed for individuals who have already completed their baccalaureate degrees in fields other than education or for licensed teachers who wish to add an additional license. Students interested in teaching K-8 choose a specialty area from communication arts and literature, math, science, social studies, or world languages and cultures; in addition to all education coursework and middle-level specialty coursework, they must demonstrate competency on all state standards. Students interested in teaching in grades 5-12 choose among 14 licensure areas and must fulfill the major-field requirements as well; in addition to all education coursework, and licensure-field coursework, they must demonstrate competency on all state standards. Students can meet initial licensure requirements while earning credits toward a graduate degree. The Master of Arts in Teaching requires additional coursework beyond the licensure.

Students complete three field experiences for over 75 hours before their full-time, full-day, student teaching semester. Students are also required to complete an experience in a cultural setting different from their own. These unique, off-site opportunities provide experiential learning invaluable for prospective teachers.

Elementary Course Requirements

BLOCK I		
TEGR501	Circles of Advocates for Competency Assessment	1
TEGR510	Education's Place in Society*	3
TEGR512	Human Relations and Multicultural Education	3
BLOCK II		
TEGR530	Psychology for Teaching and Learning*	3
SPED750	Survey of Exceptionality	3
TEGR550	Language Development, Literacy and Literature I	3
BLOCK III		
TEGR570	Language Development, Literacy and Literature II	3
TEGR571	Teaching Mathematics and Technology	3
TEGR572	Teaching Science and Healthy, Active Living	3
TEGR573	Teaching Social Studies and Fine Arts	3

TEGR574	Curriculum and Instruction for Middle Level Specialty Area	1
TEGR531	Circles of Advocates for Competency Assessment II	1
BLOCK IV		
TEGR660	Student Teaching OR	6
TEGR664	Student Teaching for the Experienced Teacher	(4)
TEGR661	Circles of Advocates for Competency Assessment III	1
TEGR662	Student Teaching Seminar: The Teacher as Educational Advocate	0

*Course includes 30-hour field experience.

Secondary Course Requirements

BLOCK I		
TEGR501	Circles of Advocates for Competency Assessment I	1
TEGR510	Education's Place in Society (+ field experience)	3
TEGR 512	Human Relations and Multicultural Education	3
BLOCK II		
SPED750	Survey of Exceptionality	3
TEGR530	Psychology for Teaching and Learning	3
BLOCK III		
TEGR581	Curriculum and Instruction for Specific Discipline and Clinical (5-8)	2
TEGR582**	Curriculum and Instruction for Specific Discipline and Clinical (9-12)	2
TEGR531	Circles of Advocates for Competency Assessment II	1
BLOCK IV		
TEGR660	Student Teaching OR	6
TEGR664	Student Teaching for the Experienced Teacher	(4)
TEGR661	Circles of Advocates for Competency Assessment III	1
TEGR662	Student Teaching Seminar: The Teacher as Educational Advocate	0

(University of St. Thomas, 2001, pp 45-47)

Minnesota Licensure Requirements

Students applying for a Minnesota K-8 or 5-12 licensure must have completed an approved licensure program, cited tests, and adopted competencies.

Legislation adopted in 1985 required the Minnesota Board of Teaching to adopt tests for assessing skills in reading, writing, and mathematics for teachers licensed under Board authority. The following Assessment is required: Basic Skills (Reading, Writing, And Mathematics) Praxis I. In addition, new legislation requires general pedagogy and content tests for teacher licensure

for individuals submitting an application for Teacher Licensure to the Minnesota Department Of Children, Families & Learning on or after September 1, 2001.

The Following Assessments are required: Basic Skills (Reading, Writing, And Mathematics) Praxis I Series; General Teaching Knowledge, and Licensure Field Specific Content Knowledge. (Minnesota Department of Children, Family and Learning, website)

Students must also show competencies in each of the following INTASC standard areas:

Standard One: Subject Matter
The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for students.

Standard Two: Student Learning
The teacher understands how children and youth learn and develop and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.

Standard Three: Diverse Learners
The teacher understands how learners differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to learners from diverse cultural backgrounds and with exceptionalities.

Standard Four: Instructional Strategies
The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the students' development of critical thinking, problem solving, and performance skills.

Standard Five: Learning Environment
The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

Standard Six: Communication
The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, non-verbal and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.

Standard Seven: Planning Instruction
The teacher plans and manages instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

Standard Eight: Assessment
The teacher understands and uses formal and informal assessment strategies to evaluate and ensure the continuous intellectual, social, and physical development of his/her learners.

Standard Nine: Reflection and Professional Development
The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of her/his choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professionals in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

Standard Ten: Collaboration, Ethics, and Relationships
A teacher communicates and interacts with parents/guardians, families, school colleagues, and the community to support the students' learning and well being.

Research Methodology and Summaries

A survey was given to all students enrolled in Block One of a teacher preparation program that offers a BA for undergraduates and license leading to an MA for graduate students. They were informed that filling it out was voluntary and had no impact on their grade. The data was collected and analyzed comparing it to similar data collected ten years ago. Demographic data was collected along with high school attended, college attended (for graduate students), home of origin, grade point average, licensure-interest area, desired place of employment, and the education levels and occupations of parents/guardians. The respondents were then asked to list their top three reasons for wanting to teach. An analysis was conducted and the specific results will be shared comparing and contrasting the results of a similar survey conducted in 1991-92.

1991-1992 Research Summary

Over four semesters (1991-92) the students in the Introduction to Education courses during Block I of the graduate and undergraduate programs were surveyed. The total number of students who chose to complete the survey was 339.

In the elementary education program the students were evenly split between the traditional (18-24) and non-traditional ages (25 and above); however in the secondary program there were 14% more traditional age students than non-traditional age. Interestingly that higher figure for the graduate level was the result of 22-24 year olds who thought they would find a career in business, finance or marketing. This group often discussed that their undergraduate degree was to please their parents and to make money, but the graduate-level teacher licensure was for them.

It was no surprise that 80% of the elementary education students were females; whereas, the male-female split was approximately even in the secondary education group. According to the traditions in elementary education, more women are still interested in lower grade levels.

Eighty percent of graduate students were non-traditional age. Although the amount of non-traditional undergraduate students was only 20%, this reflects the growing numbers of 25 and older who are attending colleges. .

The GPA's of graduate students were almost 20% higher than undergraduate students.

There are three times more non-white graduate students than undergraduate students. This results from the inclusion of a special Collaborative Urban Educator program (CUE). (see Appendix 2)

Approximately twice as many graduate students indicated they would prefer an urban setting to teach in and two thirds of undergraduates said they would seek employment in suburban settings. (Appendix 3)

When asked why they chose to teach, seventy-five percent of the undergraduates listed "love kids" as one of their top three answers compared to fifty percent of graduate students. Thirteen percent of undergraduates named coaching; this figure was ten percent higher than the graduate students' responses. The responses were fairly comparable for "loved going to school," "helping kids," "making a difference in the world," "continuing personal learning," and "challenging, rewarding profession." Thirteen percent more graduate students cited "the schedule" than undergraduates; but considering more graduate students were married with families, this difference is understandable. (Appendix 4)

2000-2001 Research Summary

During fall and spring semesters of 2000-2001, undergraduate and graduate students in Block I courses were asked to voluntarily fill out a survey. Block I courses are often used as a testing ground for students who are unsure of a career choice, so not all students had already committed to teaching as a profession. Choosing to fill out the survey had no impact on the students' course grade. The survey approximated the one used in 1991-92; however, specific categories were added for race, family information, rural teaching, and the K-12 licensure.

One hundred and ninety-one students responded; Fifty-one were graduate students and 140 were undergraduates.

The undergraduate programs remain predominantly traditional age (18-24) thus not showing the dramatic increases of nontraditional students in undergraduate settings predicted by adult learning theorists in the early 1990s. Most interesting is that in 1991-92 survey there were actually 16% more nontraditional students enrolled than the four percent in the 2000-2001 group. The graduate programs showed eighty- percent nontraditional age students.

When examined for sex, close to three-fourths of the undergraduates were female whereas, the numbers were closer to equal in the graduate program. Still, three times more graduate females than males indicated they would prefer to teach elementary, while two percent of undergraduate males were in the elementary licensure track compared to forty-one percent of the undergraduate females. A more interesting finding was that the undergraduates and graduates who completed this survey were rather evenly split between elementary and secondary paths. The final observation related to gender and an elementary/secondary preference was that almost twice as many male, graduate students than female were choosing secondary education.

Graduate students must have at least a 2.75 undergraduate GPA in order to be accepted in any St.Thomas teacher education program. However, undergraduates can enroll in Block I & II

courses before applying, interviewing and being accepted into the undergraduate teacher education program. A 2.75 overall GPA is required along with positive recommendations from the education advisor and the co-major advisor. As shown in this survey, conducted in Block I courses, seven percent of undergraduates were below 2.75 and 20% of the students did not indicate their GPA, perhaps because it was too low for program admittance. Interestingly, forty-five percent of the undergraduates had GPA's of 3.4 or higher compared to 36% of graduate students.

Seven percent of undergraduates were non-White; the University's undergraduate average is ten percent. Only twelve percent of graduate students were non-White; these figures are similar to those in the 1991-92 survey. So, although America has seen considerable increases in non-White population, this college in Minnesota has not attracted a very diverse group to teaching. (Appendix 5)

When asked to indicate where they would prefer to teach, the percentage of undergraduate and graduate students choosing urban settings was closer, 24% and 33%. Three times as many undergraduates than graduate students chose suburban settings. This is unsurprising when considering the majority of UST students come from suburban settings and have had little experience, until their initial field placements, in urban settings. The interesting statistic gleaned was that ten- percent of graduates and 5% of undergraduates chose the new category "rural." Finally, more students in both programs say they are willing to take any placement once they are licensed. (Appendix 6)

When asked to cite reasons for wanting to teach twenty percent more undergraduates than graduates indicated "love kids," and sixty-five percent of graduates compared to fifty-one percent of undergraduates wrote, "change the world." The other categories demonstrated wide

differences in reasons. For example, one fifth of the undergraduate students considered teaching "challenging" compared to one third of graduate students; one tenth of undergraduates compared to two thirds of graduates said they could "continue their personal learning" as a teacher; twice as many graduates cited "schedule." The most surprising was that forty-two percent of undergraduates wrote "help kids" as a reason for wanting to teach, while none of the graduate students did. (Appendix 7)

Data Analysis: 1991-92 to 2000-2001

In the approximately ten years since the surveys were administered, there is a better balance between elementary and secondary teacher education majors in University of St. Thomas's undergraduate program. It was two-thirds elementary and now it is closer to half. Our graduate program continues to mimic the national surveys showing three-fourths of elementary teachers are women; however, our undergraduate program continues to show more than ninety-five percent females enrolled in elementary.

Our undergraduate program continues to be predominantly traditional age students and our graduate program continues to enroll nontraditional age as the majority. Likewise, the racial makeup of our teacher education students has stayed the about the same over the last ten years: over ninety percent Caucasian. There was a slight increase in undergraduate students of color from three percent to six percent.

The undergraduate GPA's are higher today than ten years ago; eighty-one percent are 3.0 or above compared to fifty-four percent in 1991-92. Grade inflation could be a factor or, hopefully, more talented students are choosing to teach. The graduate figures were less dramatic yet still showed improvement in the 2000-2001 survey. Seventy-three percent, in 1991-92, were 3.0 or above compared to eighty-five percent in 2000-2001. Finally, in 1991-92, teacher

education students could enter the program with a 2.5 GPA; therefore, the higher figures of thirty-two percent graduate and undergraduate students with 1.5-2.74 GPA compared to the seven percent indicated on the more recent survey.

Although not asked in the 1991-92 survey, an interesting finding was that one fifth of undergraduates and one third of graduate students indicated that one or both of their parents had been educators. Anecdotally, students have discussed their educator-parents' desires that they not pursue a teaching degree; the parents cited poor pay, stress, large class sizes, and little respect. The students felt that they were successful academically and happy because their parents had flexible schedules, could coach them, and stressed the value of learning throughout their childhood.

Our undergraduates continue to choose suburban settings for their teaching intentions, but the surveys show a slight increase in wanting to teach in urban settings and a desire to teach anywhere there is a job. The graduate students showed a decrease in interest in urban settings, an interest in rural placements and an increased interest in teaching where ever there was a job. The national education surveys indicate that 100% of urban districts need teachers. One strong indicator that UST can contribute to that solution is that many of our students eventually seek urban placements for student teaching or for their first jobs which is a fact not obvious in this survey of Block I students, conducted early in the semester. Once students have completed a required, urban field experience, they find out if they are suited to that setting; most are pleasantly surprised.

The most interesting findings are the reasons students indicated for wanting to become teachers. In the first survey three fourths of the undergraduates indicated "love kids" as one of their top-three reasons; the highest response for graduate students was also "love kids" with

49%. In the later survey, "love kids" was still the highest for undergraduates, but the percentage dropped to sixty-one. The graduate students had a clearly favorite answer with sixty-five percent writing, "change the world." This response was up eighteen percent from the earlier survey.

The most dramatic shifts occurred in several responses. Where forty-three percent of undergraduates had previously said, "challenging, rewarding profession," now only nineteen percent responded likewise. Could the recent negative press on schools and teachers or salaries that do not keep pace with inflation have contributed to this decline? Could comments from parents who are educators have contributed? Since we did not conduct interviews or focus groups, we do not have reasons for this dramatic shift. Likewise, one graduate response showed a significant change. Sixteen percent in 1991 had indicated that "continue personal learning/stimulating" was why they wanted to teach; in contrast, fifty-nine percent wrote that reason in 2000!

Three, final, obvious response differences were the answers, "help kids" and "loved going to school/ loved the subject," and "would be good at it." Forty-four percent of graduate students wanted to "help kids" in 1991 and no one wrote that answer in 2000! The two categories that picked up responses were "change the world" and "continue personal learning." The first could be extrapolated to have a helping-kids' connotation, but it is difficult to see how the second offers an interpretation related to "helping kids"—or at least enough to eliminate the exact words.

The second, "loved going to school," was indicated by thirty-five percent of graduate students in 1991, but only fourteen percent chose it in 2000. The undergraduate figures decreased as well, but not as dramatically: 32% in 1991 and 23% in 2000. Have K-12 schools

become less engaging? Have teachers been less inspiring? Again, our survey did not ask students to explain their responses.

Finally, twenty-five percent of graduate students and twenty percent of undergraduates in the 1991 survey said they thought they would be "good at teaching." In the 2000-2001 instrument, those figures had dropped to 4% and 3%. Have fewer students experienced interactions with youth as mentors tutors and babysitters? It is understandable that kids' busy schedules might preclude babysitting opportunities at the same rate as it occurred ten years ago, but high school and college kids are volunteering more and completing more service work than ever before. This particular answer speaks to the importance of increasing field experiences for preservice teachers. Our teacher education students need to seek out varied settings and work with more youth to determine if they are on the right career path and to gain confidence in their abilities to excel as educators.

Several national instruments have recently been used to discover why individuals choose to teach; one such survey was *A Sense of Calling: Who Teaches and Why,* by Farkas, Johnson & Foleno, cited in Wadsworth's article (May 2001, pp. 24-28). The researchers focused on 664 public and 250 private school teachers with five or fewer years in the classroom. Although our students' responses reflected why they think they *want* to be a teacher and the 2000 survey results asked current teachers to *reflect back* on why they wanted to teach, the comparisons are interesting.

Eighty-six percent said they had a calling to teach. None of our preservice teachers used *calling* or *vocation* in their responses; perhaps a teacher needs to teach before knowing they were a fit for the profession. Sixty-eight percent they are getting a lot of satisfaction from teaching; about thirty-five percent of our students indicated a similar response. Eighty-one percent of new

teachers indicated that having time to spend with family was an important attribute of the teaching career. More of our graduate students than undergraduates were able to predict that this would be a contributing factor in teaching. Since our graduate students are predominantly nontraditional age and many are married with families, this difference would be expected. Seventy-two percent in the national survey said one of the three most important attributes of teaching was "contributing to society and helping others." This response helps us understand why none of our 2000 graduate respondents indicated "help kids." They perhaps thought that "change the world" was the same thing, as their sixty-five percent response ratio showed.

Three important findings in the national survey are worth discussing. Although experts have predicted teacher shortages, only fifteen percent expect widespread shortages. Most problems are subject specific; ninety percent of administrators said they need math, the sciences, and special education teachers. (Boser, 2000) Second, sixty-eight percent of administrators explained that there is a shortage of minority teachers. Our survey results show the low non-White percentages of students enrolled in our teacher education programs. Finally, "thirty-four percent of new teachers said they chose to become a teacher when they were in college" (Wadsworth, May 2001, p. 26). Many students have always know they wanted to be a teacher; many played school with their dolls and stuffed animals; however, if one third of new teachers did not choose to teach until they were enrolled in college, we all can influence more youth to consider the profession. Especially important is to seek out diverse students as well as students in math and science majors and to introduce them to tutoring and service opportunities with kids. At the University of St. Thomas, 12-15% of all over 5,000 undergraduates volunteer yearly. Forty-five of one hundred teacher education students surveyed indicated that they volunteer 5-15 hours per week! (Reif, 1997) The Tutor-Mentor program at UST is the biggest feeder to our

undergraduate teacher education major. Teacher educators, service program coordinators, liberal arts professors must commit to identifying, recruiting, and engaging bright, energetic, excited young people to enter the teaching ranks in order to fill the expected shortages.

Conclusions

As the research suggests current students are often more aware of the demands placed on teachers and are seeking the profession in order to make a difference in the lives of children. They are also stimulated by continuing professional development and have a desire for lifelong learning. These significant changes speak highly of the caliber and dedication of the teachers of tomorrow.

While teaching is a demanding profession the respondents acknowledged their understanding of the demands and a desire to work with kids. This is significant and should lead to a lower attrition rate among those entering the profession.

A factor that closely mirrors other teacher education programs is the low number of students of color seeking the teaching profession. This is an issue that is being addressed and while the numbers do mirror the national averages they are low which may have had an impact on the outcomes of the research.

This research is limited by the demographics of the population that was assessed. The next steps would be to conduct an ongoing dialogue with those who were enrolled to discover where they became employed and if the continued in the profession.

References

Ashton, P. (1996). *Improving the preparation of teachers*. Educational Researcher, Vol. 25, No. 9, pp. 21-22, 35.

Ashton, P., & Crocker, L. (1986). *Does teacher education make a difference?* Gainesville, Fl: University of Florida

Boser, U. (January 13, 2000). A picture of the teacher pipeline: Baccalaureate and beyond. *Education Week: Quality Counts 2000, 19*(18), pp.16-17.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Sclan, E. (1996). Who teaches and why: Dilemmas of building a profession for twenty-first century schools. In J. Sikula, T. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 67- 101). New York: Macmillan.

Feiman-Nemser, S., & Remillard, J. (1996). Perspectives on learning to teach. In F. Murray (Ed.), *The teacher educator's handbook* (pp. 63-91). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Good, T. (1996). Teaching effects and teacher evaluation. In J. Sikula, T. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 617-665). NY: Macmillan.

Goodlad, J. (1994). *Educational renewal*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Greene, M. (1978). *Landscapes of learning*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Grossman, P. (1990). *The making of a teacher*. New York: Teachers College.

Ingersoll, R. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*, 39, 3, 499-534.

Lanier J., & Little, J. (1986). Research on teacher education. In M. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of educational research* (pp. 527-568). NY: Macmillan).

McDiarmid, G. W., & Wilson, S. (1991). An exploration of the subject matter knowledge of alternate route teachers: Can we assume they know their subject? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 42, 93-103.

Minnesota Department of Children, Family and Learning (http://www.cfl.edu)

Murray, F. (1996). Beyond natural teaching: The case for professional education. In F. Murray (Ed.), *The teacher educator's handbook* (pp. 3-13). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

National Center for Education Statistics Digest of Education Statistics (1999). Washington DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

National Education Association (July 1997). The status of the American Teacher. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

Recruiting New Teachers (2001). Teaching field facts. Belmont, MA: Recruiting New Teachers.

Reif, M. (1997). *Service commitments of University of St. Thomas teacher education students,* unpublished data.

Sarason, S. (1993). *The case for change: Rethinking the preparation of educators.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Sikula, J. (1996). Introduction. In J. Sikula, T. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. xv-xxiv). New York: Macmillan.

University of St. Thomas Undergraduate Catalog (2000-2002), pp.6-8. St. Paul, MN.

University of St. Thomas Education Catalog (2001) pp. 45-47, pp.49-51. St. Paul, MN.

Wadsworth, D. (May 2001). Why new teachers choose to teach. *Educational Leadership*, 58: 8, 24-28.

Warring, D. & Reif, M. (February 5, 1992). Who, what, shy, where: Tomorrow's teachers in a global society. Presentation at Association of Teacher Educators' Conference. Orlando, FL.

Appendix 1
Teacher Education Survey

_____ Graduate _____ Undergraduate
_____ Traditional Age (18-24) _____ Nontraditional Age (25 and above)
_____ Male _____ Female
_____ European-American _____ African American _____ Latino/Hispanic American
_____ Asian American _____ American Indian _____ (other; please specify)
High School Attended: _____
College Attended: _____
_____ Undergraduate Major(s) _____ Overall GPA
Teaching Plans:
_____ Elementary Ed. _____ Secondary Ed. _____ Undecided _____ K-12
_____ Licensure Area (math, Spanish, etc.)
Area of desired employment: _____ Urban _____ Suburban _____ Rural
Home of origin (state or country): _____
Parent(s)/Guardian(s) occupation(s): _____
_____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) highest level of education: _____
_____

Name your top three reasons for wanting to teach; list the most important first, etc:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Appendix 2

Population and Demographics for 1991-92

1991-92: N = 339	UNDERGRADUATE N = 155	GRADUATE N = 184
MALE	20%	52%
FEMALE	80%	48%
ELEMENTARY	67%	60%
SECONDARY	33%	40%
ELEM. MALE	2%	17%
ELEM. FEMALE	65%	42%
SEC. MALE	12%	21%
SEC. FEMALE	14%	20%
K-12 MALE	NA	NA
K-12 FEMALE	NA	NA
TRAD. AGE ((18-24)	80%	20%
NONTRAD. AGE (25--)	20%	80%
CAUCASION AMERICAN	97%	90%
AFRICAN AMERICAN	NA	NA
HISPANIC AMERICAN	NA	NA
ASIAN AMERICAN	NA	NA
NATIVE AMERICAN	NA	NA
OTHER	3%	10%
NOT NOTED	NA	NA
1 or 2 PARENTS TEACH	NA	NA
Undergraduate GPA's:		
4.0-3.7	14%	22%
3.6-3.4	21%	27%
3.3-3.0	19%	24%
2.9-2.75	22%	19%
2.7-1.5	24%	8%
unlisted	NA	NA

Appendix 3

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO TEACH?

1991-1992	GRADUATE	UNDERGRADUATE
URBAN	42%	22%
SUBURBAN	19%	60%
RURAL	NA	NA
ANY	26%	15%
UNDECIDED	13%	3%

Appendix 4

WHY TEACH?

1991-92	GRADUATE: N = 155	UNDERGRAD: N = 184
Love kids	49%	75%
Change the world/make a difference	47%	46%
Challenging, rewarding profession	36%	43%
Continue personal learning/ stimulating	16%	18%
The schedule	21%	34%
Help kids	44%	53%
Coaching	3%	13%
Loved going to school/love the subject	35%	32%
Good at it	25%	20%

**Students were asked to list their top-three reasons.

Appendix 5

Population and Demographics for 2000-01

2000-2001: N = 191	UNDERGRADUATE	GRADUATE
MALE	22%	45%
FEMALE	78%	55%
ELEMENTARY	44%	41%
SECONDARY	39%	51%
ELEM. MALE	2%	10%
ELEM. FEMALE	41%	31%
SEC. MALE	17%	33%
SEC. FEMALE	21%	18%
K-12 MALE	0	0
K-12 FEMALE	9%	0
TRAD. AGE ((18-24)	96%	14%
NONTRAD. AGE (25--)	4%	80%
CAUCASION AMERICAN	92%	88%
AFRICAN AMERICAN	0	6%
HISPANIC AMERICAN	3%	0
ASIAN AMERICAN	3%	6%
NATIVE AMERICAN	0	0
OTHER	1	0
NOT NOTED	2%	0
1 or 2 PARENTS TEACH	21%	34%
Undergraduate GPA:		
4.0-3.7	21%	16%
3.6-3.4	24%	20%
3.3-3.0	36%	49%
2.9-2.75	8%	12%
2.7-1.5	7%	0
unlisted	20%	2%

Appendix 6

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO TEACH?

2000-2001	GRADUATE	UNDERGRADUATE
URBAN	33%	24%
SUBURBAN	16%	49%
RURAL	10%	5%
ANY	31%	17%
UNDECIDED	10%	5%

Appendix 7

WHY TEACH?

2000-2001	GRADUATE: N = 51	UNDERGRAD: N = 140
Love kids	41%	61%
Change the world/make a difference	65%	51%
Challenging, rewarding profession	34%	19%
Continue personal learning/ stimulating	59%	11%
The schedule	22%	11%
Help kids	0	42%
Coaching	0	4%
Loved going to school/love the subject	14%	23%
Good at it	4%	3%

**Students were asked to list their top-three reasons.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

ERIC

REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Why Teach: A comparative analysis of responses from prospective teachers enrolled in professional education programs in 1991-92 with those in 2000-01	
Author(s): Douglas Warring & Margaret Reif	
Corporate Source: University of St. Thomas	Publication Date:

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1

☑

Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) *and* paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A

☐

Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B

☐

Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits.
If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: Margaret Reif	Printed Name/Position/Title: Margaret Reif, Ed.D. Associate Professor
Organization/Address: 217 MOA Univ of St. Thomas 1000 LaSalle Ave. Mpls, MN 55403	Telephone: 651 962 4421 FAX: 651 962-4169
	E-Mail Address: MTREIF@ STTHOMAS.EDU Date: April 8, 02

(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, *or*, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:
Address:
Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:
Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching
and Teacher Education
1307 New York Ave., NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005-4701

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
4483-A Forbes Boulevard
Lanham, Maryland 20706

Telephone: 301-552-4200
Toll Free: 800-799-3742
FAX: 301-552-4700
e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov
WWW: http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com

EFF-088 (Rev. 2/2000)